United Nations S/2013/359

Security Council

Distr.: General
17 June 2013

Original: English

Report of the Secretary-General on transnational organized crime and illicit drug trafficking in West Africa and the Sahel region

I. Introduction

1. On 21 February 2012, the Security Council held a special session on peace and security in Africa under the Presidency of Togo, at which it discussed the impact of transnational organized crime on peace and stability in West Africa and the Sahel region. At that session, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2012/2) in which it expressed serious concern about the threat posed by organized crime to socioeconomic development, the delivery of humanitarian assistance and peacebuilding efforts in the region. It called for system-wide action by the United Nations to combat the spread of illicit drugs and weapons in countries struggling to overcome armed conflict and instability.

2. On 10 December 2012, the Security Council held a high-level session on the situation in the Sahel under the Presidency of Morocco, during which Council members and other stakeholders expressed grave concern about the deteriorating security situation in the Sahel, especially in Mali, and stressed the importance of a coherent, comprehensive and coordinated approach in addressing the multifaceted crisis affecting the beleaguered region.

3. Against this backdrop, the present report is submitted pursuant to the presidential statement adopted on 21 February 2012 (S/PRST/2012/2), in which the Council requested me to make specific recommendations on how the Council might address transnational organized crime, including illicit drug trafficking in West Africa and the Sahel region, taking into account the views of Member States and recent experiences in the field. Whereas the present report seeks to provide strategic advice on an effective response, such action should be viewed as part of wider integrated and multidisciplinary efforts encompassing security, development, good governance, human rights and the rule of law.

4. Over the past five years, there has been significant international mobilization against the growing impact of transnational organized crime and illicit drug trafficking in West Africa and the Sahel. The present report will therefore provide an update of the relevant developments in the region since 2008, evaluate the progress made thus far and make recommendations on the way forward.

13-25359 (E) 090713

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II. Situation analysis

A. Security trends in West Africa and the Sahel

5. Transnational organized crime, including illicit drug trafficking, remains a major threat to peace and security in the region. In 2010, an estimated 18 tons of pure cocaine transited West Africa on its way to Europe, a flow worth over $1 billion on arrival. This represents a significant reduction from the peak in 2007, when the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime estimated that close to 47 tons had transited the region.

6. The means by which drugs are transported to the region have varied over time, probably in response to enforcement efforts. Between 2003 and 2007, most of the cocaine transiting West Africa was owned by organized syndicates from Colombia; it was stored primarily in maritime consignments on board "mother ships", and then transported to shore by smaller vessels from the coast of West Africa. Between 2008 and 2010, a number of private aircraft flying from the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to West Africa were detected, including twin turboprop and jet aircraft. Between 2005 and 2011, approximately 5.7 tons of cocaine were seized from shipping containers travelling from Latin America to Europe through West Africa, including 2.1 tons in 2011 alone. Cocaine is also shipped from Brazil, most notably Sao Paulo and the neighbouring port of Santos, where Nigerian traffickers supplement their usual air courier and postal shipments of cocaine with maritime trafficking.

7. According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime *World Drug Report 2012*, cocaine consumption in West Africa appears to have grown to around 1.1 million users. West Africans are paid for their logistic services in cocaine, and some choose to sell it locally rather than smuggle it on to Europe, as they do not have the links and networks needed to undertake such trafficking activities and are afraid of the risks associated with trafficking drugs to Europe. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime is undertaking an assessment of drug consumption in the region, particularly among youth, the results of which are expected later this year.

8. Between 2010 and 2013, three methamphetamine laboratories were discovered in Nigeria, and there are suspicions that similar labs are operating in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana. In 2009, related chemical precursors were seized in Guinea, while 17.5 kilograms (kg) of methamphetamine were seized in 2012 at Lomé Airport in Togo. There has also been a sharp increase in recent years in the number of West Africans arrested for trafficking methamphetamine to East Asia. An estimated 1,500 air couriers trafficked around 1.5 metric tons of methamphetamine from West Africa to East Asia in 2010, generating gross revenues of about $90 million. Since methamphetamine can be produced wherever the precursors are available, the threat of its manufacture, particularly in the undergoverned areas of the region, is a cause of increasing concern.

9. Recently, there appears to have been an increase in the amount of heroin transiting West Africa, largely through commercial air couriers. In 2011, a total of 392 kg of heroin was seized. Medium-sized shipments of heroin have been detected with some regularity, particularly in Ghana and Nigeria. It appears that most of the heroin originates from South-West Asia, including from the Islamic Republic of Iran and Turkey. As with cocaine, most of the heroin appears to be destined for the

European market, though some of it may be diverted to North America or local markets.

10. While data are limited, the prevalence of HIV among injecting drug users remains a cause of major concern. In Ghana, around 4 per cent of new HIV infections are attributed to injecting drug use, while HIV prevalence among injecting drug users in Senegal is 9.1 per cent. In Nigeria, an analysis in 2007 of the modes of HIV transmission showed that injecting drug use had contributed to 9.1 per cent of new infections, while the prevalence of HIV among injecting drug users was estimated at 5.6 per cent, according to the Federal Minister of Health in Nigeria.

11. At least 10 per cent of the pharmaceuticals sold in West Africa are fraudulent, meaning that the contents differ markedly from what is indicated in the packaging. In 2010, fraudulent medicines were estimated to have retailed at $150 million in West Africa. In addition to their impact on health in the region, the use of fraudulent anti-infective drugs that contain amounts of active ingredients that are lower than the levels specified can foster the growth of drug-resistant pathogens, a threat to public health globally.

12. Some 5,000 West African women have been trafficked into sexual exploitation in Europe annually in recent years, generating around $200 million. Organized criminal syndicates from Nigeria continue to dominate those networks. Human trafficking can be exacerbated by armed conflicts that increase the number of refugees and internally displaced persons in the region and make women more vulnerable to those types of crimes.

13. There are indications that the smuggling of migrants by sea from West Africa to Europe has declined. In 2010, the number of irregular migrants detected entering Europe by sea was less than 16,000, one sixth of the 90,000 irregular migrants detected a decade ago. An estimated $100 million was generated by smugglers in 2011, compared with $155 million in 2010. This downward trend is attributed to diminishing economic opportunities in Europe and improvements in law enforcement. Fraudulent documentation continues to facilitate the smuggling of migrants by both land and air. An emerging trend is the use of West Africa as a transit hub for migrants travelling from Asia en route to Europe or the Americas.

14. Incidents of piracy and armed robbery in West Africa have risen significantly since 2010, making the piracy problem in the region the second most acute in Africa after Somalia. According to the International Maritime Organization, which participated in the United Nations inter-agency mission to the Gulf of Guinea in November 2011, a total of 43 attacks occurred in the region in the first 10 months of 2012, compared with 58 attacks recorded for the same period in 2011 and 45 attacks in 2010.

15. While pirate attacks are not new to the region, recently they have shifted to new areas. Previously, most of the attacks were in Nigeria and were related mainly to the conflict over oil in the Niger Delta. Those attacks have been in decline, however, while those in neighbouring Benin increased sharply in 2011. This increase affected the costs of shipping to Benin, a country dependent on its port revenues. Many of the attacks appear to involve Nigerian pirates and target ships bearing petroleum products. In contrast to their Somali counterparts, pirates in the Gulf of Guinea typically attack close to shore, often using small craft, while the

targeted vessel is at port or transferring cargo. This suggests an opportunistic character to the attacks.

16. There is increasing evidence that transnational organized crime has contributed to the destabilization of constitutionally elected governments and has undermined peacebuilding efforts in the region. In extreme cases, it has led to the destabilization of duly constituted governments, as competing factions seek to displace one another. Arguably the most affected country in this regard is Guinea-Bissau, which has experienced a series of dramatic politico-security events accelerated by cocaine transit in the country.

17. Transnational organized crime is often aided by corruption, which undermines good governance and the rule of law. It is also often associated with violence, political instability and conflict, which deters legitimate investors and encourages the flight of human capital, thus negating economic and social development. There are also growing concerns that illicit trafficking funds non-State armed groups in West Africa and the Sahel, although evidence of this is limited.

B. Recent developments

18. According to the International Organization for Migration, between February 2011 and April 2012, 790,000 migrant workers and their families crossed the Libyan border into other countries to escape the conflict in the country. The current number of returnees following the crisis in Libya, including unregistered cases, is believed to be much higher. Neighbouring countries have also had to contend with a large inflow of weapons and ammunition from the Libyan arsenal smuggled into the Sahel by former fighters, who were either members of the Libyan regular army or mercenaries during the conflict. This has raised concerns that weapons may be sold to terrorist groups active in the region and added to the fear of renewed rebellion in the Sahel-Sahara area, following a flow of mercenaries and combatants from Libya to both Niger and Mali in the wake of the fall of Muammar al-Qadhafi's regime. The situation is further compounded by the potential recruitment and radicalization of unemployed youth and returnees.

19. There has also been an increase in terrorist activities in the Sahel region. This includes the establishment of the jihadist movements Ansar Dine and the Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa, during the course of 2011. In October of that year, the Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa claimed responsibility for the kidnapping of three European aid workers in the Sahrawi refugee camps controlled by the Frente Popular para la Liberación de Sagua el-Hamra y de Rio de Oro in Tindouf, Algeria. The Movement is also responsible for the kidnapping of seven diplomats attached to the Algerian Consulate in Gao, northern Mali, in April 2012, including the Defence Attaché and Vice-Consul. On 7 December, the United States Department of State placed the Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa on the country's "designated global terrorist" list, and adopted a series of sanctions against the Movement and its leaders, including a freeze on their assets held in the United States.

20. The proliferation of weapons in the Sahel following the crisis in Libya has greatly contributed to regional instability. Although work is ongoing to quantify the amount, it is estimated that between 10,000 and 20,000 assault rifles may have been trafficked from Libya into Mali, since the start of the crisis in Libya. On 22 March

2012, disgruntled junior officers overthrew President Amadou Toumani Touré amid anger over his failure to adequately equip the army to fight insurgents in the north of the country, who were heavily armed, including with weapons from the Libyan arsenal. Soon after the launching of the offensive in the North, the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad gave way to extremist groups that proved operationally stronger, and other groups have taken control over parts of the country's vast desert north, making it a new haven for terrorists.

21. In April 2012, Guinea-Bissau suffered a coup one day before the commencement of the campaign for the presidential election run-off between outgoing Prime Minister Carlos Gomes Junior and the opposition candidate, Koumba Yala. The infiltration of criminal groups into Guinea-Bissau has further complicated the security situation in the country. International intelligence suggests that cocaine trafficking is taking place by air, sea and land, without any interception by transitional authorities or security forces. It is believed that hundreds of kgs of cocaine are trafficked in each transaction. In addition to illicit drug, small arms and merchandise trafficking, illegal fishing and the illegal export of timber and mineral and other resources remain a major concern and source of internal dispute that involves civilian and military authorities. This creates additional in-country disputes with negative impact on peace, stability and humanitarian/development efforts. In May 2012, the country's Transitional President, Serifo Nhamadjo, expressed his commitment to address organized crime in the country and to restore respect for good governance, human rights and the rule of law. The military leadership has also issued similar statements.

22. There are also strong indications that illegally bunkered oil/petrol in Nigeria is being trafficked northwards through Benin and Niger by criminal groups in the Sahel. The growing presence of Boko Haram militants along the Nigeria-Cameroon border and around Lake Chad is also a cause for concern. There have been frequent attacks against public services in north-east Borno State, and civilians have suffered a high number of casualties during clashes between the militants and the government.

III. International response

A. United Nations system (policy level)

23. The Security Council has recognized that transnational organized crime constitutes a threat to peace and security in West Africa and ought to be mainstreamed into the overall United Nations security and development agenda.[1]

[1] See Security Council resolutions 2018 (2011) (piracy and armed robbery at sea in the Gulf of Guinea); 2017 (2011) (dissemination of illicit small arms and weapons in the Sahel); and presidential statement adopted on 21 February 2012 (S/PRST/2012/2) (threat of drug trafficking and transnational organized crime to peace and security); and Security Council resolution 2039 (2012) (piracy and armed robbery at sea in the Gulf of Guinea, and the threat of drug trafficking and transnational organized crime).

Consequently, a number of special sessions of the Security Council have been convened to discuss its impact, particularly on fragile and post-conflict countries.[2] The Council has also consistently invited the Secretary-General to consider transnational organized crime as a factor in conflict analysis and prevention strategies, as well as to assess the role of the Council in addressing transnational threats in situations on its agenda.

24. The United Nations system task force on transnational organized crime and drug trafficking was established in March 2011, inter alia, to develop a coherent and multilateral approach to mitigating the impact of transnational threats on national dynamics. The Task Force, which is led jointly by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the Department of Political Affairs, provides an important forum for United Nations agencies to coordinate their support to Member States to ensure that the response to transnational threats is both pragmatic and effective. To this end, it promotes a comprehensive and balanced framework that centres on prevention, capacity-building, shared responsibility, regional and interregional cooperation, and the protection of public health, human rights and the rule of law.

25. On the occasion of the United Nations International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking on 26 June 2012, the General Assembly held a thematic debate on drugs and crime as a threat to development, which emphasized the impact of drugs and crime on poverty alleviation and the Millennium Development Goals. Its outcome included a summary that will be transmitted to the Thirteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, to be held in Doha in 2015, which will focus on integrating crime prevention and criminal justice into the wider United Nations security and development agenda.

26. Since 2009, the Security Council has invited the Secretary-General to mainstream the impact of transnational organized crime into the assessment, planning and reporting of integrated missions. Consequently, United Nations special political missions and peacekeeping operations are mandated to respond with increasing frequency to the threats posed by drugs and crime. In West Africa, four countries currently host an integrated United Nations mission, namely; the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire, the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS), the United Nations Mission in Liberia and the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone (UNIPSIL). One of the main thematic areas addressed within their respective mandates is organized crime, illicit drug trafficking and counter-terrorism.

27. Pursuant to Security Council resolution 2065 (2012), I deployed a United Nations inter-agency technical assessment mission to Sierra Leone in January 2013 to conduct a review of progress made in the implementation of the mandate of UNIPSIL and to provide a report containing detailed proposals and a recommended timeline for the transition, drawdown and exit strategy of the Office. The mission found that UNIPSIL, in accordance with its mandate, has played an important role in supporting the Government of Sierra Leone in its efforts to counter transnational

[2] See presidential statement adopted on 10 July 2009 (S/PRST/2009/20) (threat of drug trafficking and transnational organized crime to peace and security); presidential statement adopted on 8 December 2009 (S/PRST/2009/32) (drug trafficking and organized crime to be mainstreamed into the work of the United Nations throughout the conflict cycle); and presidential statement adopted on 24 February 2010 (S/PRST/2010/4) (threat of drug trafficking and transnational organized crime to peace and security).

organized crime and illicit drug trafficking. Continued support in the areas of strategic planning and coordination of efforts to address transnational organized crime is of critical importance. As UNIPSIL prepares to draw down, the continuation of the technical assistance and financial support to the Transnational Organized Crime Unit within the framework of the implementation of the West African Coast Initiative will continue to be essential.

28. Pursuant to Policy Committee decision No. 2012/16/iv of 20 November 2012, I deployed a United Nations inter-agency mission to Guinea-Bissau to conduct an analysis of the key drivers of instability in the country and prepare a short- to medium-term strategy by early January 2013, prior to the renewal of the UNIOGBIS mandate in February 2013. The analysis found that following the military coup on 12 April 2012, Guinea-Bissau continued to face major challenges linked to the absence of civilian control and oversight over the military, organized crime and drug trafficking, as well as impunity. Consequently, the five-year United Nations strategy that was subsequently developed for Guinea-Bissau identifies four interlinked priority areas, including strengthening State capacity to combat drug trafficking and organized crime in the country. Pursuant to Policy Committee decision No. 2012/16/v of 20 November 2012, I further requested the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, together with the Department of Political Affairs, UNIOGBIS and the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for West Africa (UNOWA), to conduct an analysis of the impact of drug trafficking and organized crime in Guinea-Bissau and on its neighbours and the region. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the Department of Political Affairs will prepare their forthcoming update to the Policy Committee on drug trafficking and organized crime based on their findings. Moreover, the United Nations undertook a technical assessment mission to Guinea-Bissau from 18 to 27 March 2013. The mission report recommends specific assistance by the United Nations in the areas of transnational organized crime and drug trafficking.

29. To further support peacebuilding efforts in countries emerging from violent conflict within the region, four of the six countries currently on the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission are in West Africa, namely, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia and Sierra Leone. The Commission has identified combating illicit drug trafficking as a peacebuilding priority and has been advocating for stronger international support to enhance the technical expertise and institutional capacities of those countries in order to sustain the fight against transnational organized crime in the region.

30. In December 2010, the mandate of UNOWA was renewed for another three years to enable the Organization to continue the pursuit of an integrated approach towards addressing peace and security challenges in West Africa, in close collaboration with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Mano River Union and other regional partners. Similarly, the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA), which was established in 2011, works with regional actors to help prevent conflict and consolidate peace in Central Africa. In January 2009, the Economic Community of Central African States hosted the first subregional seminar on security sector reform in Central Africa, which emphasized the need to strengthen regional cooperation, particularly in the area of border control.

31. Security sector reform features prominently in the mandates of United Nations integrated missions in West Africa and seeks to include linkages to transnational organized crime in post-conflict countries. In 2007, I established the Inter-agency Security Sector Reform Task Force to develop and promote an integrated and holistic United Nations approach to security sector reform. The Task Force, which is co-chaired by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the United Nations Development Programme, is responsible for developing standards and practices on security sector reform based on a sector-wide approach. In May 2012, the Task Force launched the first *United Nations Security Sector Reform Perspective*, which discusses the role and contribution of security sector reform in multidimensional post-conflict efforts. In December 2012, the Task Force finalized the first set of United Nations system-wide Integrated Technical Guidance Notes on Security Sector Reform. The Guidance Notes represent a crucial element in the implementation of the first report of the Secretary-General on security sector reform (A/62/659-S/2008/39) and cover six key thematic areas, including gender-responsive security sector reform, democratic governance of the security sector and United Nations support to national security policy and strategy-making processes.

32. In Guinea-Bissau, an outcome group involving UNIOGBIS and the United Nations country team was established in 2010 to ensure an integrated approach to security sector reform and the rule of law. This has enabled a series of policy discussions in the areas of defence, internal security and justice reforms. Issues pertaining to illicit drug trafficking and transnational organized crime have been mainstreamed into the comprehensive security sector reform effort within the framework of the adopted integrated strategic framework.

B. United Nations system (operational level)

33. The United Nations system supports the development of security sector capacities to address cross-border and cross-cutting threats to peace and security in the region, including illicit drug trafficking. To this end, the United Nations system contributes to the implementation of the ECOWAS Regional Action Plan to Address the Growing Problem of Illicit Drug Trafficking and Organized Crime in West Africa 2008-2011 through the joint West Africa Coast Initiative, which was developed in 2009 and is being implemented by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Political Affairs/UNOWA and the Organisation International de la Police Communitaire/ International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) initially in four fragile and post-conflict countries, namely, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia and Sierra Leone. In June 2011, the West Africa Coast Initiative High-level Policy Committee agreed to extend the Initiative to other West African countries, upon request, beginning with Guinea, where an assessment mission was fielded in April 2012. The Initiative seeks to contribute to reduction of illicit drug trafficking and other criminal activities in West Africa, mainly through the establishment of specialized transnational crime units aimed at strengthening inter-agency cooperation and the establishment of communication and linkages at the operational and technical levels between transnational crime units and other enforcement interventions in the subregion. In Guinea-Bissau, UNIOGBIS and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime assisted the Government in the conceptualization of the 2011-2014 national plan to fight illicit drug trafficking and transnational organized crime,

which encompasses the West Africa Coast Initiative. The plan has been mainstreamed into the overall security sector reform effort.

34. As part of the efforts of the United Nations system to strengthen maritime security in the region, I dispatched a United Nations inter-agency mission in November 2011 to assess the prevalence of piracy in the Gulf of Guinea. The mission, which was led jointly by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the Department of Political Affairs, recommended that the United Nations continue to mobilize resources to strengthen national capacities and coordinate international assistance for maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea, in consultation with relevant actors. Consequently, the United Nations system is working with other international partners to support the implementation of the recommendations of the assessment mission, as well as Security Council resolutions 2018 (2011) and 2039 (2012). The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime is also providing support to the Government of Benin in the development of a comprehensive national integrated programme to counter transnational organized crime in and around the country, including piracy.

35. Following the assessment mission, the United Nations system continued to engage regional and international partners in developing a comprehensive regional anti-piracy strategy for the Gulf of Guinea, pursuant to Security Council resolution 2039 (2012). To that end, my Special Representative for West Africa, Said Djinnit, and my Special Representative for Central Africa, Abou Moussa, held a preparatory meeting with the President of the ECOWAS Commission, the Secretary-General of the Economic Community of Central African States and the Executive Secretary of the Gulf of Guinea Commission in Gabon on 31 May 2012 to discuss the convening of a summit of heads of State and government on maritime piracy and armed robbery at sea in the Gulf of Guinea. That meeting was preceded by a joint Economic Community of Central African States and ECOWAS Maritime Safety and Security Conference in Benin, which explored the possibilities of creating counter-piracy synergies between the two regional economic communities. On 22 and 23 October 2012, the technical working group and the steering committee, which were established jointly on 31 May by ECOWAS, the Economic Community of Central African States and the Gulf of Guinea Commission as well as UNOCA and UNOWA, met in Libreville to discuss the way forward. Also present were representatives of the Maritime Organization for West and Central Africa and the United States Department of State. On 19 March 2013, a ministerial meeting was held in Benin at which three key documents to address piracy and organized crime were adopted. The documents will be submitted for endorsement by the heads of State and government of Central and West Africa at a summit to be held in Yaoundé on 24 and 25 June 2013.

36. In response to the growing political, security and humanitarian vulnerabilities affecting the Sahel, I dispatched a joint United Nations assessment mission to the Sahel in December 2011 to assess the impact of the Libyan crisis in the region. The assessment revealed a number of disturbing developments. They include the influx of returnees, the proliferation of weapons from the Libyan arsenal, and a surge in criminality and terrorist activities in countries in the Sahel. The mission proposed a range of recommendations with a strong focus on an integrated response and conflict prevention programming.

37. Following the assessment mission, the United Nations Inter-agency Task Force on the Sahel was established to develop an effective and comprehensive system-wide response to the multifaceted threats affecting the subregion. On 18 June 2012, a partnership for resilience through the multi-stakeholder initiative Alliance Globale pour l'Initiative Résilience-Sahel was launched as part of wider international efforts aimed at promoting the development of resilience-based approaches in the region. A United Nations Action Plan for Resilience Building in the Sahel was also developed in July 2012.

38. By its resolution 2056 (2012), the Secretary-General requested me to develop and implement, in consultation with regional organizations, a United Nations integrated regional strategy for the Sahel, encompassing security, governance, development, human rights and humanitarian issues. During the High-level Meeting on the Sahel on 26 September 2012, which was held on the margins of the sixty-seventh session of the General Assembly, there was strong support for the development of such a strategy. On 9 October 2012, Romano Prodi, of Italy, was appointed as my Special Envoy for the Sahel, inter alia, to coordinate United Nations system-wide efforts in the region. Subsequently, in its resolution 2071 (2012), the Security Council welcomed the appointment of Mr. Prodi to mobilize international efforts, formulate and coordinate the implementation of the United Nations integrated regional strategy for the Sahel, as well as contribute to defining the parameters of a comprehensive solution to the crisis in Mali.

39. In accordance with Security Council resolution 2085 (2012), I dispatched an advance team of the United Nations multidisciplinary presence on 20 January 2013, led by the Department of Political Affairs, to assist with the political and security tracks in Mali. Since then, the United Nations Office in Mali has been working towards the implementation of resolution 2085 (2012). On 25 April 2013, the Council adopted resolution 2100 (2013) establishing the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali.

40. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime Regional Programme on West Africa 2010-2014 supports the implementation of the extended ECOWAS Regional Action Plan 2008-2011. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime contributes to and supports efforts aimed at: addressing organized crime, illicit trafficking and terrorism; building justice and integrity; improving drug prevention and health; and promoting awareness and research. The regional programme targets 16 countries in West Africa (Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, the Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo) and supports a broad range of global, regional and national initiatives.

41. In the area of research and analysis, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime has undertaken several studies and assessments as the basis for programmatic interventions, the latest being the threat assessment on transnational organized crime in West Africa, which was released jointly by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the ECOWAS Commission on 25 February 2013 in Côte d'Ivoire, within the framework of the United Nations System Task Force on Organized Crime. The assessment highlights the main developments related to illicit flows and emerging challenges within the subregion, such as piracy in the Gulf of Guinea and insecurity in the Sahel.

C. Regional platforms

42. Since the adoption of the African Union Plan of Action on Drug Control and Crime Prevention 2007-2012 by the African Union heads of State at the summit in January 2008, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime has been supporting its implementation. Efforts are now focused on supporting the African Union Commission to initiate the implementation of the African Union Plan of Action on Drug Control 2013-2018, which was endorsed by the African Union Conference of Ministers for Drug Control and Crime Prevention at its fifth session, held in Addis Ababa in October 2012.

43. In October 2008, ECOWAS convened a ministerial conference that resulted in the adoption of the ECOWAS Political Declaration and the Regional Action Plan to Combat Illicit Drug Trafficking, Organized Crime and Drug Abuse 2008-2011, both of which were endorsed by the ECOWAS Authority of Heads of State and Government thirty-fifth ordinary session held in December 2009. The ECOWAS political declaration urges the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to strengthen its technical assistance to the region within the framework of the ECOWAS Regional Action Plan, which was extended until the end of 2013 at the forty-second ordinary session of the Authority of ECOWAS Heads of State and Government, held on 27 and 28 February 2013 in Abidjan.

44. During that session, the ECOWAS Authority of Heads of State and Government also adopted the Political Declaration on a Common Position Against Terrorism, which includes a counter-terrorism strategy and implementation plan. The strategy is the result of an inclusive process that began in 2009 following the engagement of the ECOWAS Commission with UNOWA and the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate. It underscores the importance of linking regional counter-terrorism mechanisms with the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and other similar initiatives in order to prevent and eradicate terrorism and related criminal activities in West Africa.[3]

45. In April 2010, the Joint Operational Senior Staff Committee was established in Tamanrasset, Algeria, to coordinate security operations by Algeria, Mali, Mauritania and Niger. A joint intelligence cell, the Unité de fusion et liaison, was subsequently established to monitor terrorist activities. Neighbouring countries, such as Nigeria, have gradually associated themselves with those regional mechanisms. During the Algiers Conference on Partnership, Security and Development in the Sahel, held in September 2011, Algeria, Mali, Mauritania and Niger committed to develop a shared vision to counter-terrorism. In March 2012, the Government of Libya hosted a Ministerial Regional Border Security Conference in Tripoli to discuss common security challenges facing the Sahel and opportunities for enhanced regional cooperation, under the framework of the Tripoli Action Plan on Regional Cooperation and Border Control.

46. A Sahel working group, set up as part of the Coordination Committee of the Global Counter-terrorism Forum, a United States initiative co-chaired by Algeria and Canada, has developed a draft workplan for international cooperation on

[3] Such mechanisms include the strategy for the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the ECOWAS Intergovernmental Action Group against Money Laundering in West Africa, the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate and the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force.

counter-terrorism in the Sahel. The United States has also initiated the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership, a multi-year programme comprising Algeria, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Niger, Tunisia, and the United States, which is aimed at preventing terrorist and extremist expansion across West and North Africa. The United States Africa Command provides military support to the Partnership programme. The African Centre for Studies and Research on Terrorism, based in Algeria, has organized several regional training projects and provided technical assistance to countries on counter-terrorism.

47. In December 2009, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime concluded a memorandum of understanding with the Intergovernmental Action Group against Money-Laundering in West Africa, which was established by the ECOWAS Authority of Heads of State and Government in 2000 and is responsible for facilitating the implementation of anti-money-laundering and counter-terrorism financing measures in West Africa. As the Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering-style regional body for West Africa, the Intergovernmental Action Group against Money-Laundering in West Africa seeks to ensure compliance with international anti-money-laundering/counter-terrorism financing standards. To this end, the memorandum of understanding sets out a strategic framework for enhancing technical assistance by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in the area of anti-money-laundering/counter-terrorism financing. Similarly, countries in North Africa are all members of the Middle East and North Africa Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering.[4]

48. In December 2011, a regional ministerial conference on impunity, justice and human rights in West Africa was held in Bamako, under the aegis of the Government of Mali and UNOWA, with the support of the United Nations system. The conference culminated in the adoption of the Bamako Declaration and Strategic Framework on Impunity, Justice and Human Rights, which provides concrete recommendations to strengthen good governance and the rule of law, with a view to preventing conflict. Eight thematic recommendations are highlighted in the Bamako Declaration and Strategic Framework, including the development of a regional strategy to facilitate the prosecution of persons involved in transnational organized crime, under the auspices of ECOWAS and in line with the 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances.[5]

D. National strategies and responses

49. Member States in West Africa and the Sahel have undertaken several initiatives to address security threats affecting the region. At the national level, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime is assisting ECOWAS member States to develop national integrated programmes that seek to place the fight against drugs and crime within their development and security agendas. To that end, the Office is supporting the development and implementation of a number of national integrated programmes for countries such as Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Ghana and Togo. Implementation of the national integrated programmes for Guinea-Bissau and Mali has been suspended pending the restoration of constitutional order in both countries.

[4] Chad is a member of Groupe d'action contre le blanchiment d'argent en Afrique centrale, the regional group for Central Africa, which is only now becoming operational.

[5] United Nations *Treaty Series*, Vol. 1582, No. 27627.

The development of national integrated programmes for Benin, Liberia, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria and Sierra Leone has been initiated, and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime is assisting with resource mobilization to support their implementation.

50. The portfolio of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in Nigeria has expanded significantly following the development of a comprehensive European Union-funded programme to assist the Government in the areas of anti-corruption, criminal justice reform and countering organized crime.

51. In November 2010, Burkina Faso police led the INTERPOL-supported Operation Cascades, which resulted in the rescue of more than 100 suspected victims of child trafficking from illegally operated gold mining quarries. In November 2011, national forces participated in the INTERPOL-led Operation Atlantic, in which fake goods worth $1.5 million were seized. It was preceded by the INTERPOL-coordinated Operation Cobra a month earlier, which resulted in the seizure of more than 10 tons of counterfeit medicines and over 100 arrests. More recently, Burkina Faso participated in Operation Cocair 3, in which more than 500 kg of drugs were seized and €2.5 million recovered in 25 airports across West and Central Africa and in Brazil.

52. Chad participates in the Trans-Saharan Counterterrorism Partnership, which includes a military-to-military assistance programme aimed at increasing the country's counter-terrorism operations and preventing border incursions, human trafficking and the smuggling of illicit goods. In the area of human trafficking, in June 2011 the Government finalized a United Nations children and armed conflict action plan with the United Nations Children's Fund to end the recruitment and use of children in the national security forces, with the aim of having Chad eventually delisted from the United Nations list of State sponsors of child soldiers.

53. In August 2011, deposed President Amadou Toumani Touré of Mali introduced the special programme for peace, security and development in northern Mali which is indicative of the willingness of the Government to reassert its power in the north. The Government also introduced a series of measures to adapt the national security establishment to the threat of terrorism, particularly in the vast northern regions of Gao, Kidal and Timbuktu. National legislation on counter-terrorism has been in place since July 2008.

54. Mauritania has undertaken several steps to combat extremism in the country, especially following the deterioration of the security situation in the Sahel region, as a result of the crises in Libya and Mali. A comprehensive national counter-terrorism legislation and strategy is currently being implemented.[6] The Government has also made efforts to delegitimize the ideological justifications for radicalism by hiring hundreds of new imams to preach in the country's mosques, and engaging extremist prisoners through a dialogue with state-sponsored Islamist scholars and clerics. Mauritania has emerged as one of the nations most determined to strike at Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb, both within and beyond its territory.

55. In October 2011, Niger published its national strategy on terrorism, security and development, which targets six of its eight regions in the Sahel-Saharan area. The

[6] The national strategy on counter-terrorism has the following components: (a) religious and doctrinal; (b) cultural and academic; (c) communications; (d) political; and (e) justice, defence and security. Legislation on counter-terrorism was adopted in 2010.

strategy is in line with the 2006 United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and the 2012 European Union Strategy for Security and Development in the Sahel.

E. Transatlantic cooperation

56. During the ministerial Group of Eight plus Paris meeting on transatlantic drug trafficking in May 2011, 22 nations adopted the political declaration and action plan on transatlantic drug trafficking, which is aimed at strengthening transatlantic cooperation in countering the world drug problem.[7] The Group of Eight plus Paris ministerial meeting was followed by a joint United States/European Union transatlantic symposium in Lisbon, which focused on converging illicit networks. Consequently, the Group of Eight plus has sought to strengthen its efforts on improving donor assistance within the framework of the Action Plan and expanded participation in it to countries in Latin America.

57. In the framework of the Group of Eight plus Action Plan, the United States Department of State Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement, the United States Coast Guard and the European External Action Service of the European Union convened a workshop in Senegal in the second half of 2012 to address maritime-related criminal justice gaps in West Africa.

IV. Progress and challenges

58. The Transnational Crime Unit established in Sierra Leone under the West Africa Coast Initiative programme is the most advanced among the five countries in the programme, and has been assisting the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and the United Kingdom Serious Organized Crime Agency with in-country fraud inquiries. The Unit has investigated 269 cases since becoming operational in 2010. In November 2011, the Unit conducted "Operation Desert Breeze", which resulted in the seizure of 128 kg of cannabis, the destruction of vast areas of marijuana fields and the arrest of six suspects. In 2012, a large-scale operation took place under the code name "Operation Green Hay I" during which 1.7 tons of marijuana was seized, as well as several marijuana plantations identified and destroyed. To further build on the Programme, national authorities in Sierra Leone were assisted to develop comprehensive counter-narcotics legislation.

59. In May 2012, assessments were undertaken to initiate implementation of the West Africa Coast Initiative in Côte d'Ivoire and Guinea. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime has also provided the equipment needed for the disposal of three seized stockpiles of precursor chemicals in Guinea. Transnational crime units have been established in Liberia and Guinea-Bissau. Prior to the coup d'état in April 2012, the transnational crime unit established in Guinea-Bissau had made several, albeit minor, seizures of cocaine, which were destroyed by the judicial police with

[7] The Group of Eight plus Political Declaration and Action Plan on Transatlantic Drug Trafficking. The seven areas for joint action are: (a) universalization and implementation of international conventions; (b) improving the collection and sharing of information; (c) intensifying maritime cooperation; (d) improving international cooperation legal mechanisms to target and confiscate criminal assets; (e) addressing the long-term destabilizing effects of drug trafficking; (f) strengthening the capacity of Member States; and (g) financing the fight against drug trafficking.

the support of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. However, owing to the current political situation, the latter has suspended activities under the Initiative and does not have any presence in Guinea-Bissau pending the restoration of constitutional order. The INTERPOL National Central Bureaux in Guinea-Bissau, Liberia and Sierra Leone have also been strengthened and properly equipped to be more effective.

60. While the West Africa Coast Initiative has contributed, inter alia, to improved law enforcement cooperation and intelligence gathering, there is an urgent need to further strengthen the delivery of technical assistance and funding as part of a larger sustainability strategy. In this regard, the 2011 West Africa Coast Initiative ministerial meeting also recognized the need to establish an overarching regional project management structure to ensure synergy within the Initiative as well as with other law enforcement and judicial developments in the ECOWAS region. Those measures would ensure that the Initiative achieves its overall objective, taking into account the challenges of operating in fragile settings and the need for long-term reforms.

61. Under the Global Container Control Programme, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the World Customs Organization have established Joint Port Control Units in Benin, Cape Verde, Ghana, Senegal and Togo, where they have yielded results. The Unit established at the Port of Lomé in Togo seized 192 kg worth of cocaine in 2011, which had been concealed in shipping pallets from Brazil, 3.7 kg of tramadol, a synthetic opioid not under international control, that was illegally imported from India, and 6,000 counterfeit cigarettes that originated from the United Arab Emirates. In the same year, the Unit established at Port Tema in Ghana seized 500 cases of counterfeit Hewlett-Packard printer toner cartridges, illegal stun guns and counterfeit Unilever cosmetics.[8] In 2011, the Unit established at the Port of Cotonou in Benin assisted in the seizure of 202 kg of heroin concealed among a shipment of T-shirts in a container destined for Nigeria and 405 kg of cocaine discovered in a container of pipeline valves, which had originated in Brazil.[9] The Unit established at the Port of Dakar in Senegal was instrumental in the seizure of 8,700 pieces of counterfeit synthetic hair, "VENUS" brand, 10,200 bottles of expired medication, and uncertified dialysis equipment.[10]

62. Under the Airport Communication Project, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, in cooperation with INTERPOL and the World Customs Organization, has supported the establishment of joint airport interdiction task forces at priority international airports in Cape Verde, Mali, Senegal and Togo, where they have made considerable seizures of cannabis, cocaine and gold. Assessment missions have been undertaken in Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Kenya and Nigeria to support the expansion of this innovative project.

63. Awareness of illicit financial flows remains relatively low among local authorities. To date, only Cape Verde, Nigeria and Senegal have reported successful convictions for corruption-related offences and confiscations of illicit proceeds of crime. Moreover, inadequate legal provisions, unclear guidelines and procedures, and limited inter-agency coordination continue to hinder the effective recovery of

[8] See United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime-World Customs Organization Global Container Control Programme, Year End Report 2011, p. 22.

[9] Ibid., p. 15.

[10] Ibid., p. 33.

proceeds of crime. To address those challenges, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime intends to support the establishment of a regional inter-agency asset recovery network to facilitate the exchange of information.

64. In the area of counter-terrorism, there is a need to strengthen the criminal justice capacity and the Regional Judicial Platform for the Sahel. Little progress has been made in the implementation of Security Council resolutions 1267 (1999)[11] and 1373 (2001),[12] despite the delivery of substantial technical assistance in the area of terrorism financing.

65. In 2012, the Government of the Gambia requested the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime for support in the formal destruction of 2 tons of cocaine that had been seized in 2010. In response, a technical assessment mission was undertaken, inter alia, to discuss the potential elaboration of a national strategy to counter drugs and crime. Under the Cape Verde national integrated programme 2006-2011, strengthened institutional capacity was evidenced by the seizure of 1.5 tons of cocaine in Praia in October 2011. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime is supporting the Government in the development of a new national integrated programme under the One United Nations Programme.[13]

66. While some progress has been made in mitigating some of the threats affecting West Africa and the Sahel, Member States continue to face complex and simultaneous challenges. Political instability, unresolved internal tensions and the geographical vastness of the region have hindered the effective and timely delivery of technical assistance and capacity-building programmes. Moreover, limited absorption capacities, insufficient resources and the perceived lack of coordination at all levels have had further impacts on the sustainability of ongoing initiatives.

V. Recommendations

67. The following are recommendations for Member States in West Africa and the Sahel, for international partners and for the United Nations on how the Security Council might address transnational organized crime, including drug trafficking, in West Africa and the Sahel region, taking into account the views of Member States and recent experiences in the field:

Member States in West Africa and the Sahel

(a) Support the implementation of the African Union Plan of Action on Drug Control 2013-2017 and prioritize the extension and implementation of the ECOWAS Regional Plan of Action 2008-2011, in line with the final communiqué of the forty-first ordinary session of the ECOWAS Authority of Heads of State and Governments;

(b) Strengthen subregional, regional and interregional cooperation through existing platforms;

[11] Security Council resolution 1267 (1999) was adopted on 15 October. It established a sanctions regime to cover individuals and entities associated with Al-Qaida, Osama bin Laden and/or the Taliban wherever they may be located.

[12] Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) was adopted on 28 September as a counter-terrorism measure following the attacks carried out against the United States on 11 September 2001.

[13] To that end, several thematic assessment missions were undertaken in the course of 2011.

(c) Establish national strategies to combat organized crime, illicit trafficking and terrorism, improve drug prevention and treatment, and allocate resources to support their implementation, as well as encourage national ownership and sustainability of transnational crime units by local authorities on a long-term basis;

(d) Enhance national inter-agency cooperation among all actors concerned with preventing organized crime, and strengthen national capacities, in particular the criminal justice and law enforcement systems, with rationalized resources, under civilian oversight;

(e) Develop and implement measures to protect and assist victims of transnational organized crime and reduce the specific vulnerabilities affecting trafficked persons and smuggled migrants;

(f) Support the implementation of the new ECOWAS Counter-Terrorism Strategy and Implementation Plan in line with relevant international instruments;

(g) Strengthen efforts to advance good governance and criminal justice, including fighting impunity and corruption and enhancing respect for human rights and the rule of law, in line with the 2011 Bamako Declaration on Impunity, Justice and Human Rights;

(h) Pursue the development and implementation of a comprehensive regional strategy against maritime piracy in the Gulf of Guinea, pursuant to Security Council resolution 2039 (2012);

(i) Promote public awareness of the impact of organized crime, illicit trafficking and terrorism in the region;

International partners

(j) Continue to support Member States in the subregions in the implementation of regional operational frameworks, such as the African Union Plan of Action on Drug Control 2013-2017 and the extended ECOWAS Regional Plan of Action 2008-2011, as well as relevant national plans in countries of the subregion;

(k) Increase donor support to the region and improve donor coordination, strengthen transatlantic cooperation and ensure a balanced approach when supporting capacity-building programmes targeting the region;

(l) Support efforts to integrate transnational organized crime into the overall United Nations security and development agenda in order to ensure a coherent and multidisciplinary response;

(m) Support regional cooperation mechanisms involved in investigating and prosecuting cases pertaining to illicit trafficking and organized crime, including the seizure and confiscation of criminal assets;

(n) Support efforts to systematically collect, analyse and share intelligence pertaining to illicit trafficking and organized crime in the region in accordance with relevant statutory regulations;

(o) Support the role of civil society in addressing transnational organized crime, promoting justice and integrity, as well as improving drug prevention and treatment in the region, and enabling programmes to protect witnesses, victims and investigators;

(p) Support the development and implementation of the United Nations Integrated Regional Strategy on the Sahel, pursuant to Security Council resolution 2056 (2012);

United Nations

(q) Support the extension of the ECOWAS Regional Plan of Action 2008-2011 and the implementation of the ECOWAS Operational Plan;

(r) Promote a comprehensive and balanced framework that centres on prevention, capacity-building, shared responsibility, regional and interregional cooperation, as well as the protection of human rights and the rule of law, under the framework of the United Nations system task force on transnational organized crime;

(s) Further strengthen cooperation and coordination among all my Special Representatives in West Africa and my Special Envoy for the Sahel to address the threat of transnational organized crime and illicit drug trafficking to peace and security in the region;

(t) Implement the forthcoming United Nations integrated regional strategy on the Sahel, pursuant to Security Council resolution 2056 (2012), thus ensuring a balanced approach in addressing governance, security, human rights, development and humanitarian-related issues;

(u) Ensure close cooperation with all development partners and civil society, and support the same;

(v) Continue to develop and implement strategies to combat evolving security threats, strengthen justice and integrity, and address the health-related aspects of drug use in the region, in consultation with relevant stakeholders;

(w) Identify and disseminate good practices and lessons learned in the investigation and prosecution of cases pertaining to transnational organized crime;

(x) Support regional cooperation mechanisms aimed at strengthening the criminal justice aspects of illicit trafficking, organized crime and counter-terrorism, including the recovery of proceeds of crime;

(y) Support efforts aimed at identifying, seizing and disposing of illicit firearms and ammunition with a view to strengthening national firearms control regimes;

(z) Enhance cooperation with the Peacebuilding Commission, as well as among United Nations peacekeeping operations and special political missions in the region, under the framework of the United Nations system task force on transnational organized crime;

(aa) Support the establishment of an international contact group on transnational organized crime for West Africa to ensure continuous high-level political mobilization and international coordination;

(bb) Continue to monitor, analyse and share information on trends relating to drugs and crime so as to develop and implement appropriate responses in consultation with relevant actors.

VI. Conclusion

68. Transnational organized crime remains a major threat to peace and security in West Africa and the Sahel. The urgency of the situation is compounded by political instability in the region, as evidenced by the power vacuums created by the coup d'états in Guinea-Bissau and Mali in 2012, the proliferation of weapons from the Libyan arsenal and increasing evidence of linkages between criminal syndicates and extremist groups in the region. This has reinforced the need for more concerted efforts in addressing existing and emerging transnational threats in the region, which have global implications. However, such issues cannot be tackled in a compartmentalized manner. Rather, they require an integrated and multidisciplinary response, which centres on addressing transnational organized crime as a key developmental issue.

69. I therefore encourage Member States to strengthen their pursuit of effective countermeasures through existing initiatives, most notably the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime Regional Programme for West Africa 2012-2014, which supports the implementation of the ECOWAS Regional Action Plan 2008-2011, and includes important inter-agency initiatives, such as the West Africa Coast Initiative programme. I further urge Member States to adopt a balanced approach to addressing existing security challenges that complements law enforcement efforts with judicial and drug prevention capacity-building, within the framework of the rule of law. However, given that the success of those measures depends on a high level of political and institutional commitment, as well as national and regional ownership, it is crucial that Member States extend their support to the African Union Plan of Action on Drug Control 2013-2017 and the successor to the ECOWAS Regional Plan of Action 2008-2011, as well as to national initiatives aimed at implementing those plans.

70. I urge Member States that have yet to ratify and adopt all United Nations Conventions pertaining to drugs, organized crime, corruption and terrorism to swiftly do so, as well as to ensure their effective implementation, in collaboration with relevant actors. Moreover, in the light of the influx of weapons into the Sahel following the crisis in Libya in 2011, coupled with the emergence of new extremist groups in the region, I call upon Member States to support the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and the United Nations integrated regional strategy on the Sahel, as well as the new ECOWAS counter-terrorism strategy and implementation plan.

71. An effective and pragmatic response to illicit drug trafficking and organized crime requires strengthened transatlantic cooperation among the three continents most affected by the world drug problem, namely, South America, Africa and Europe, in line with the principle of common and shared responsibility, and on the basis of simultaneous reduction of supply and demand. To that end, there is a need to mobilize additional resources to sustain the fight against drugs and crime in West Africa and the Sahel. I, therefore, encourage the donor community to generously respond to appeals for support, given the enormity of the challenges affecting the region and the difficulties of operating in fragile settings.

72. In conclusion, the United Nations is committed to enhancing its partnership with regional actors as well as channelling its efforts through existing platforms for system-wide action, on the basis of the Paris Declaration Principles on Aid Effectiveness of 2005 and the Accra Agenda for Action of 2008. This will ensure effective international coordination and mutual accountability for results, better consolidate the achievements already made and avoid the duplication of efforts.